

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\$380,729 Grant to Montana Board of Crime Control will help monitor prescription drugs**

A \$380,727 federal grant to the Montana Board of Crime Control will help support the state's program for monitoring prescription drugs that are controlled substances. The grant will be used to enhance the state's prescription monitoring program by developing ways to share information between states, educate potential and current registered users of the program and promote collaborations between public health officials, law enforcement, and the medical and health care communities.

Prescription drug abuse is a fast growing problem in Montana and the nation. Forty-two percent of unintentional poisoning deaths occurring in Montana between 2000 and 2011 were attributed to narcotics and hallucinogens and 91 percent of those deaths included use of an opioid. In eastern Montana alone, the Bakken oil boom has brought an increase in population and crime. Drug cases are up 133 percent in the region.

The opportunity for sharing data with prescription drug registries in other states is a priority for the State of Montana. Many residents in rural, border areas of the state travel outside of the state for medical and prescription care. This grant will increase efforts to prevent prescription misuse through interstate data sharing, in addition to providing the means to build necessary improvements into the current system that will improve program functionality, timeliness and data accuracy, thereby benefiting patient care in Montana.

The MPDR is overseen by the Montana Board of Pharmacy. The MPDR enables an authorized health care provider to review a patient's prescription history for controlled drugs in Montana and use that information as a tool to enhance the quality of patient care when making health care decisions. The registry can also be used as a tool to look for indicators of potential drug dependence, drug misuse, drug diversion and/or "doctor shopping".

Begun in 2011, Montana's prescription drug monitoring program first received funding through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), US Department of Justice, Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program. Since then, the MPDR has been collecting and reporting data received from registered users on a regular basis. Seven hundred and eighteen (718) pharmacies currently report to the data registry, including out-of-state mail order pharmacies. More information about the MPDR program is available at [www.mpdrinfo.mt.gov](http://www.mpdrinfo.mt.gov).

The Montana Board of Pharmacy exists to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public by maintaining high standards of excellence for the regulated professions and occupations with the state and to advance optimal health outcomes for Montana residents. Additional information is available at [www.pharmacy.mt.gov](http://www.pharmacy.mt.gov).

The Montana Board of Crime Control is the designated state agency that administers millions of grant dollars dedicated to preventing crime and making justice system improvements statewide. The 18-member board, appointed by Governor Steve Bullock, represents law enforcement, criminal and juvenile justice system stakeholders, tribal communities and citizens. Board members provide critical leadership, oversight, and accountability of systems charged with promoting justice and public safety. More information about the Board is available at [www.mbcc.mt.gov](http://www.mbcc.mt.gov).

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